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ABSTRACT

This study examined relative spending patterns in higher education and corrections in California during the administration of Governor Pete Wilson. Data were obtained from the California Postsecondary Education Commission and the Department of Corrections. It was found that over the last 10 years, spending for higher education decreased as a percent of the general fund from 15 to 13 percent, or approximately $1.2 million; for the same period spending for corrections increased 60 percent. Since 1980 university fees have risen 303 percent in the University of California (UC) system and 485 percent in the California State University (CSU) system; in the same period 21 new prisons were built and prison guard salaries more than doubled. African Americans make up 7 percent of the state's population and 31 percent of state prisoners, but account for only 5.5 percent of students in the UC and CSU systems. Hispanic Americans are also under-represented in California's university systems and over-represented in the state's prisons. The results indicate that under Governor Wilson's tenure, more people of color entered the prison system than entered full-time undergraduate four-year colleges; the Wilson administration also saw the highest levels of prison growth and college tuition increases in the state's history. (Contains 13 references.) (MDM)

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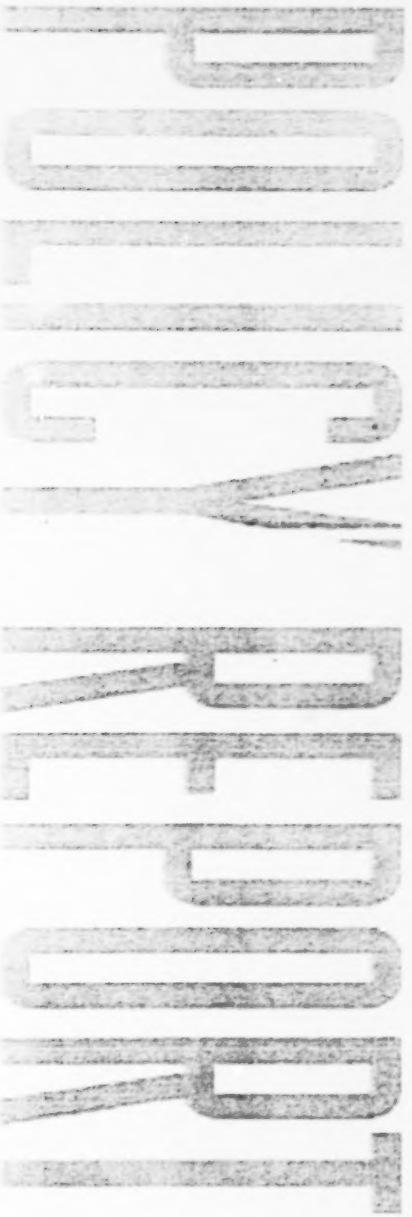
Class Dismissed:

Higher Education vs. Corrections During the Wilson Years



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Class Dismissed:
Higher Education vs. Corrections During the Wilson Years

By Khaled Taqi-Eddin, Dan Macallair & Vincent Schiraldi

"LET THE SYSTEM SETTLE DOWN, . . . STOP THE GROWTH. GET BACK TO THE BASICS OF RUNNING THE SYSTEM, NOT JUST ADDING THESE 3,000 BEDS, THOSE 5,000 BEDS, ANOTHER 7,000 BEDS." -former Corrections Director James Gomez testifying at the Corcoran prison hearings.

"UNLESS WE GET OTHER AREAS OF STATE GOVERNMENT UNDER CONTROL, AND STOP THROWING MONEY AT PROBLEMS, WE ARE GOING TO SACRIFICE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES." -Joni Finney, associate director of the California Higher Education Policy Center.

"(THEY) DESERVE THE RAISE (CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS) . . . BECAUSE THEY HAVE THE TOUGHEST BEAT IN CALIFORNIA." -Gov. spokesman Sean Walsh commenting on the 12 percent pay raise offer to corrections officers.

Introduction

In November, Californians will elect a new governor who will guide the state into the next millenium. Education has been a topic of interest during this year's gubernatorial election. The 1998-1999 budget includes significant funding increases for Higher Education. This increase represents a step in the right direction, but this is an unusual year in that California had a 4 billion-dollar surplus at the end of the 1997-1998 budget. Over the past decade,

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Higher Education has steadily decreased as a portion of the general fund from 15% in 1988-1989 to 13% in 1998-1999.[i] If Higher Education still held a 15% share of the general fund as it was a decade ago, its budget would be $1.2 billion higher. While the need for a more specialized workforce is increasing, California has watched enrollment in its universities decrease.

By contrast, the state has seen corrections rise at a greater rate than any of the other five major budget categories in the general fund. In 1980, California had 12 prisons and prison guards made approximately $21,000 per year. Presently, the state has 33 prisons and correctional officers' salaries have more than doubled (to $46,200) from what they were less than twenty years ago.

The tradeoff between prisons and universities is not unique to California. The Justice Policy Institute has conducted a series of analyses on the shift in funding from higher education to corrections taking place nationally. Some of our findings include:

- States around the country spent more building prisons than colleges in 1995 for the first time. That year, there was nearly a dollar-for-dollar tradeoff between corrections and higher education, with university construction funds decreasing by $954 million to (2.5 billion) while corrections funding increased by $926 million to (2.6 billion). Around the country, from 1987 to 1995, general fund expenditures for prisons increased by 30%, while general fund expenditures for universities decreased by 18%.[ii]

- During the 1990s, the state of Maryland's prison budget increased by $147 million, while its university budget decreased by $29 million. Nine out of ten new inmates added to the prison system during this period were African-Americans.[iii]

- The budget for Florida's corrections department increased $450 million between 1992 and 1994. That is more of an increase than Florida's university system received in the previous ten years.[iv]

- Washington, DC literally has more inmates in its prisons than students in its university system. DC's corrections system experienced a 312% increase in funding from 1977 to 1993 compared to an 82% increase in its university system during that period.[v]

The tradeoff between prisons and universities is an important analytical subject for a variety of reasons. Prisons and universities generally occupy the portion of a state's budget that is neither mandated by federal requirements nor driven by population - like Medicare or K-12 education. Because they dominate a state's discretionary funds, prisons and universities must "fight it out" for the non-mandated portion of the state's budget.

Perhaps more importantly, however, prisons and universities have the same "target audience" - young adults. As such, the fiscal tradeoffs between these two departments can serve as a barometer of sorts, helping to gauge a state's hope for its future.

Methodology and Purpose

The purpose of this study is to first examine the state's spending patterns in Higher Education and Corrections during Governor Wilson's Administration. JPI sought to compare these changes using annual expenditure data from the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC). Data produced by CPEC will also be used to examine student tuition fees over the same period of time.

Finally, using California Department of Corrections' (CDC) data on incarceration rates and CPEC enrollment data for California's State (CSU) and University (UC) systems, we will examine the changing racial composition in public colleges and prisons. The focus of this section will examine the declining male populations in public universities and the increase in prisons.

We will show that at a time of high anxiety in California's higher education system, more people of color were entering the prison system than were entering full-time undergraduate four-year colleges. While the gap between college graduates and inmates has grown over the decades, the Wilson administration has overseen prison growth and tuition increases greater than increases that occurred even under Governors Reagan and Deukmejian. Before voters decide to hand the keys of the gubernatorial mansion to Gov. Wilson's heir apparent, Californians need to know what path their youth are being lead down-and whether it is leading to ivory towers, or limestone walls.

Corrections Rises: At What Expense?

Just one day after the governor vetoed pay raises for other state workers, negotiators for correctional officers agreed to a one-year, twelve-percent pay raise.[vi] According to the Sacramento Bee, officers' top pay will go from $46,200 to $50,820 a year. Conversely, instructor's at state universities make on average between $32,000 and $37,000 per year.[vii] When it was alleged that the prison guard union's 1.5 million dollars in contributions to Gov. Wilson influenced this unique agreement, the Governor's spokesman Sean Walsh called the allegations "outrageous." The entire package will cost $80 to $100 million in the new budget signed by Governor Wilson on August 21 of this year.

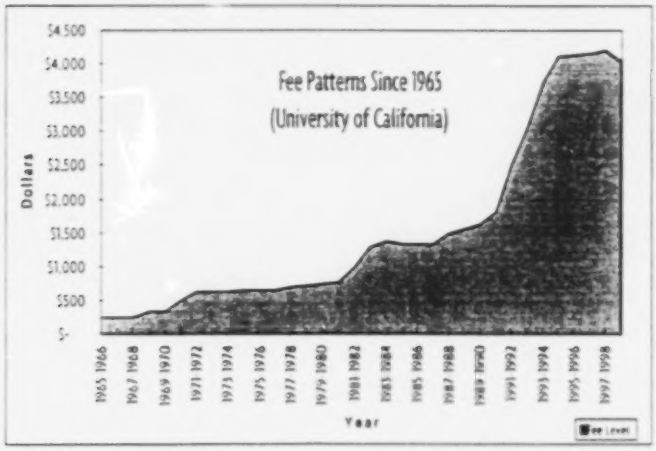
This should come as no surprise to Californians. Over the past decade, Corrections has grown as a portion of the General Fund at a greater rate than any of the other four major budget categories.

Table 1: 10, 20 and 30 Year Changes in General Fund Approp. (1998-1999 "Constant Dollars")

	Health and Welfare	Corrections	K-12 Ed.	Higher Education (end of term)	Other
10-year	-1%	60%	26%	-3%	7%
20-year	27	331	81	28	-20
31-year	221	549	236	148	205

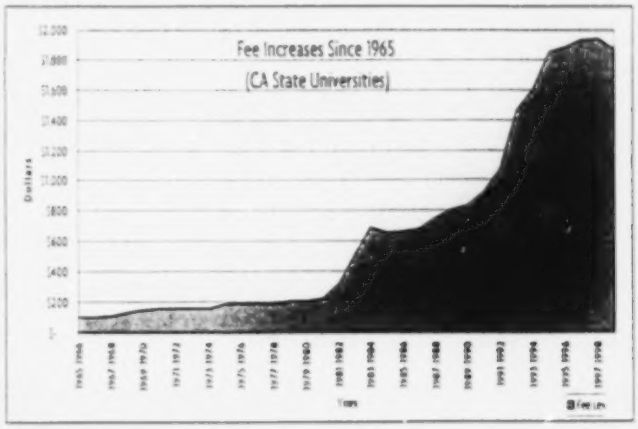
The table above illustrates increases in California's five major General Fund categories. In the last ten years, Corrections has increased 60% while Higher Education decreased by 3% in actual appropriations.[viii] Corrections witnessed its greatest increases between 1990 and the present. From 1993-1995, for example, prison spending reached its height as a percent of General Fund expenditures making up approximately 8.7% of the general fund. This is more than twice Corrections' share of General Fund expenditures in fiscal year 1984-1985 (4.1%) and more than three times Corrections' share of fiscal year 1978-1979 general fund expenditures (2.7%).

Higher Education, on the other hand, has seen decreases in general fund spending for the past eight years. From 1993-1995, baccalaureate spending reached its all time low at 12% of the general fund. Following the passage of Prop. 98, amended to include community colleges in 1990-which specifies minimum spending levels for K-14 education-the share of General Fund expenditures allocated to Higher Education increased modestly until the fiscal year 1998-1999 budget was signed. Whether these increases will continue is suspect since the trend has been to decrease Higher Education in non-surplus years. The result has been increased out-of-pocket expenses for students.



In the past thirty-three years, tuition costs in UC and CSU systems have increased dramatically. Between 1980 and the present, fees have risen 303 percent in the UC system and 485 percent in the CSU system. In this same period of time, 21 new prisons have been built and prison guard salaries have more than doubled. On the other hand, only one CSU campus has been built and students are forced to take out more in loans because of very limited resources in government grants.

According to the California Department of Corrections, it currently costs approximately $22,000 to imprison one inmate for a year. With an annual average cost of $4,022 in tuition fees, approximately 5 students could attend the University of California for the cost of housing one inmate. Additionally, at an average annual



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cost of $1868, approximately 12 students could attend the California State University system for the cost of imprisoning one inmate.

The minimum period of incarceration for inmates sentenced to 25 to life under California's "Three-Strikes" law is 21.75 years (85% of the min. sentence). This means that, in 1998 dollars, a defendant sentenced to life under "Three-Strikes" will cost a minimum of $467,500. This translates into approximately 116 students who could have attended a University of California campus. Conversely, 250 students could have attended a California State University for that amount.

The current population of California inmates serving life under "Three-Strikes" costs $95 million for one year. The state could send 23,893 students to UC or 50,878 to CSU for that same amount.

Disproportionate Representation in Schools and Prisons for Minorities

The latest census estimates reflect a continued shift in California from a predominantly White population to one with Hispanics and Asian/Pacific Islanders increasing in majority. The same shift is also reflected in enrollment to the state's public universities and prisons. The impact of California's policy decisions regarding the budget has adversely affected the poor, working/middle class and minority groups (mainly African-Americans). For example, the rise in university fees has greatly increased the out-of-pocket expenses for students. Students are becoming more reliant on loans rather than grants and scholarships, which have become increasingly limited because of the lack of funding in higher education.

Two years before Gov. Wilson took office, the cost of attending the University of California represented about 5 percent of the national median income for a white family, 8.6 percent for an African-American family, and 7.4 percent of the median income for a Hispanic family. For all families, of any race, the cost of sending someone to the University of California has increased. For a white family, the cost of sending a child to

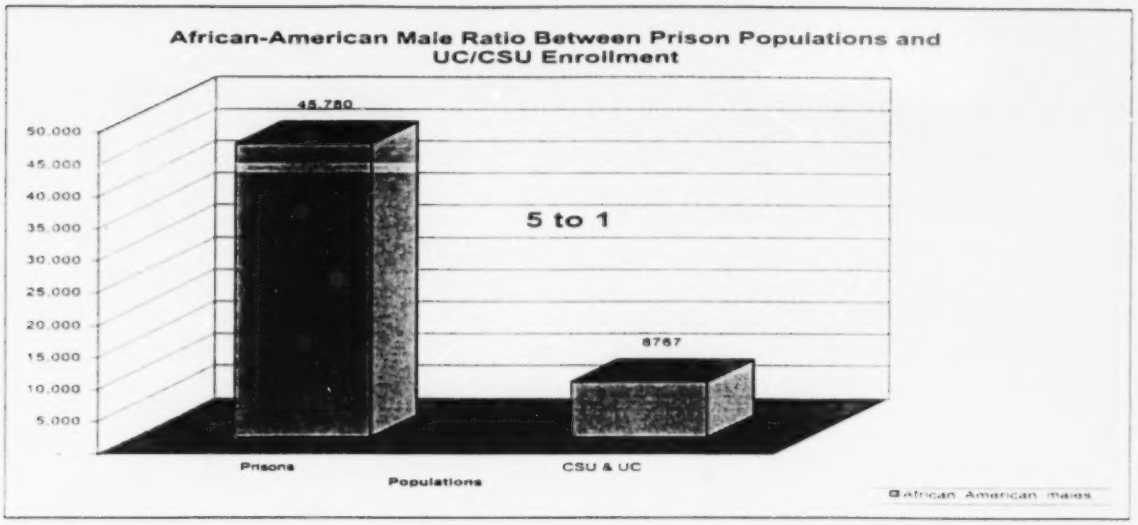
UC rose to 8.7 percent of their median income-a significant rise.

But for African-American families, today, sending a child to the UC system would represent 14 percent of the black median family income-almost double the percentage it was a decade ago. For Latinos, the cost of sending a child to UC consumes twice the portion of median family income (15%) as it did in 1989.

Total male enrollment in the University of California and California State Universities has decreased dramatically over the past decade. The numbers have decreased 8% from 200,021 to 183,626 full-time male students enrolled in the past eight years.[iv] By contrast, male incarcerations have increased 59% from 90,807 to 144,392 in this same period of time.[v] The trends in racial composition between prisons and higher education facilities reveal startling disparities for minorities.

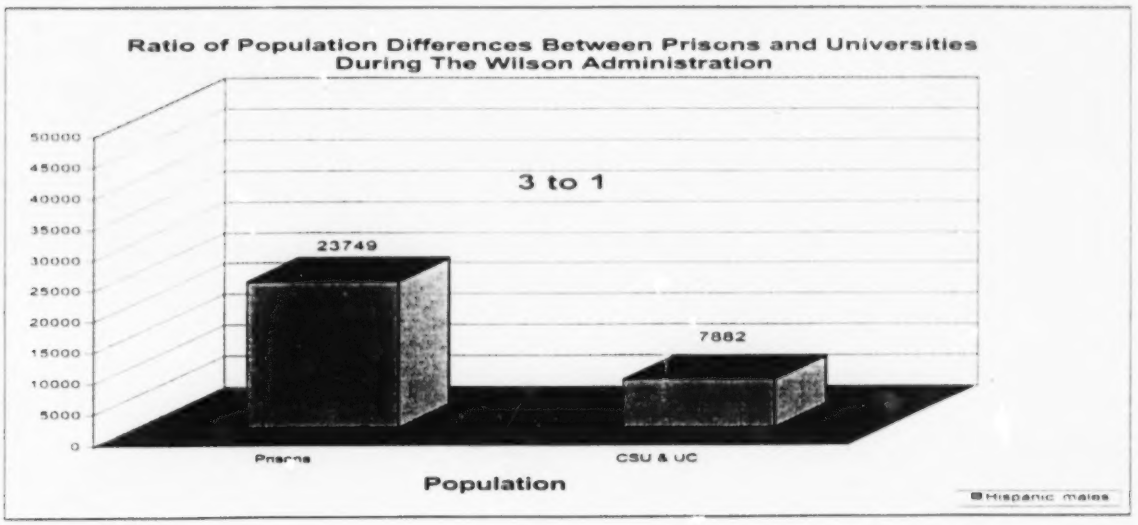
African-Americans currently make up 7% of California's population.[vi] Between 1990 and 1997, African-American male enrollment in CSU and UC systems decreased from 8974 to 8767 full-time students. During that same period of time, the total number of incarcerated black males increased from 32,145 to 44,617. While African-American male enrollment numbers decreased by 217 students, 12,147 black male inmates were added to the CDC.

The difference reveals that for every African-American male subtracted from a UC or CSU, 57 were added to a state correctional facility. The ratio of imprisoned African-American males to those in state universities is currently 5 to 1. The numbers are shockingly up from just two years ago when the ratio stood at a surprising 4 to 1. African-Americans make up 7% of the state population, yet blacks only account for 5.5% in the UC and CSU systems (both graduate and under graduate programs) while making up an astonishing 31% of CDC prisoners.



Hispanics currently make up 28% of California's population.[xii] From 1990-1995, California experienced a net gain of 1,414,000 Hispanics. The gain is also illustrated in the enrollment numbers to California's public Universities during the last seven years. Between 1990 and 1997, Latino males increased from 22,552 to 30,454 full-time students enrolled in the state's four-year public universities.

At the same time, the Hispanic male inmate population grew from 29,679 to 53,881 inmates in California correctional facilities. While Latino male enrollment increased by 7,902 students in a UC and CSU, the number of Latino males in the CDC increased by 24,202. **Put another way, 3 Latino males were added to the prison population for every one added to California's four-year public universities.**



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As the Hispanic population grew from 26% to 28% in the last eight years, the Hispanic male population grew from 11% to 17% in public universities and from 31% to 35% in the CDC. Compared to their overall representation in California, Hispanic males are underrepresented in our public universities and over-represented in our prisons. During Governor Wilson's term, Latino males have had a much greater likelihood of entering a prison cell rather than a classroom.

The Governor of Corrections?

For the past eight years, the policies and agenda of Republican Governor Pete Wilson have dominated California. The result has been cuts in higher education and increases in corrections spending as a percentage share of the budget. The trend in California for the past twenty years reveals startling increases in incarceration. Since 1990, university fees are soaring and the inmate population has increased substantially in contrast to declining crime rates. Where does Governor Wilson rank among his predecessors in the last thirty-two years regarding corrections and higher education funding, university fees and prison populations?

From 1967-1975, former President Ronald Reagan served as California's governor. During Reagan's gubernatorial term, there was an actual decrease in prison population and a total university fee growth of $1,028 (1998 "constant dollars"). The total prison population from 12/31/66 to 12/31/74 decreased by 2,726 from 27,467 to 24,741 inmates housed in the CDC. Although university fees did increase during Reagan's eight-year term as governor, higher education maintained its percentage share in the budget at 16.8% of the general fund in the 1967-1968 budget to 16.7% in the 1974-1975 budget. Conversely, Corrections witnessed a decline in percentage share of the general fund dropping from a 4% share of the general fund in the 1967-1968 budget to a 3.2% share in the 1974-1975 budget. Under Reagan's term as Governor of California, the state maintained its focus on educating rather than incarcerating.

Under Edmond G. (Jerry) Brown Jr., California witnessed an increase in total prison population and a $437 increase in public university fees. The total prison population

grew from 24,471 inmates as of 12/31/74 to 34,640 incarcerated as of 12/31/82 (difference of 9,899 inmates). While university fees had a nominal increase, Higher Education's percentage share of the budget fell from 16.8% of the general fund in the 1975-1976 budget to 14.6% in the 1982-1983 budget. The difference represented a 13.1% decrease in actual dollars not going towards higher education.

It is important to point out that Proposition 13 was enacted during Brown's term as governor. The law cut back property taxes significantly straining the state's ability to raise money. This caused a crisis mainly at the local level, which required state intervention to shore up some of the damage. Corrections reached its lowest level in general fund percentage share at 2.7% in the 1978-1979 budget, but maintained its 3.2% share throughout most of Brown's eight-year term.

Following Jerry Brown as California's governor from 1983-1991 was George Deukmejian. Under Deukmejian, the state witnessed an explosion in prison populations. As of 12/31/82, the total population of the CDC stood at 34,640 inmates. On 12/31/91, the prison population stood at 97,309 inmates or a difference of 62,669 inmates. The CDC budget increased from a percentage share of 3.7% in the 1983-1984 budget to 6.7% in the 1990-1991 budget. This represented an 81% increase in Corrections' share of the General Fund. The total growth in University fees during the Deukmejian era came to $44 (CSU=$212, UC= -$168). Under Governor Deukmejian, California's trend towards incarceration rather than education was set into motion and the stage was set for Pete Wilson.

California's current governor, Pete Wilson, is coming to the end of his eight-year term. The prison population under Wilson continued to grow at accelerated rates and university fees experienced the largest increase in the last 32 years (see table 2). On 12/31/90, the prison population in California stood at 97,309 inmates. On 12/31/98, the prison population is estimated to stand at 165,166 inmates or a 67,857 growth in prisoners.[xiii] Between Governor Wilson's and former governor Deukmejian's terms in office, 1 CSU campus and no UC campuses were built compared to 21 new prisons erected in the same period of time. University fees experienced a total growth of $2331 under Gov. Wilson, the single greatest growth in the last 32 years.

Table 2: Governor Wilson's Legacy				
	Prison Growth	Total Fee Growth	H.E. % Share (end of term)	Corrections % Share (end of term)
Pete Wilson	*67,857*	*$2,331.00*	*13.00%*	*7.90%*
George Deukmejian	62,669	44	14.60%	6.70%
Jerry Brown	9,889	437	14.60%	3.30%
Ronald Regan	-2,726	1,028	16.80%	3.30%

During the Wilson era, Higher Education reached its lowest point as a percentage share of the budget receiving 12% in the 1993-1994 budget. Conversely, Corrections hit its highest level receiving 8.7% in that same year. The trend over the last 16 years has been startling. Overall, under Gov. Wilson, the prison population and fees paid by California college students experienced their highest growth versus Governor Reagan, Brown and Deukmejian. Comparatively speaking, Wilson has earned his spot in California's history as the Governor of Corrections.

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Endnotes

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ii Ambrosio, Tara Jen & Vincent Schiraldi. February 1997. From Classrooms to Cellblocks: A National Perspective. Washington, DC: Justice Policy Institute.

iii Schiraldi, Vincent. February 1998. Is Maryland's System of Higher Education Suffering Because Prison Expenditures? Washington DC: Justice Policy Institute.

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vi Furillo, Andy. Aug.25, 1998. State offers corrections officers 12 percent pay raise. Sacramento, CA: Sacramento Bee

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xiii Based on a three year trend data from the California Department of Corrections.